



Caltrans District 1 - Eureka

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Covering California's north coast, District 1 extends from the Oregon border south to the Mendocino-Sonoma County line and east to Clear Lake, covering the four counties of Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, and Lake. Transportation planning is conducted by rural Regional Transportation Planning Agencies within each county.

TRUCKING

Primary Truck Routes

- United States (US) 101 is considered the "lifeline of the North Coast"
- State Route (SR) 20, SR 29, SR 53, US 101, and SR 299 are all part of the "Strategic Interregional Corridor"¹ network

Trucking Issues

- The Caltrans Richardson Grove Realignment project proposes to adjust the alignment and slightly expand the roadway width on US 101 through Richardson Grove State Park to allow access for State Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) trucks. Lawsuits against Caltrans citing redwood tree harm and inadequate environmental review have been heard and ruling requirements fulfilled. The start date for construction has yet to be determined.
- The SR 197/US 199 corridor is an important goods movement route for Del Norte County. A series of four planned safety improvement projects would bring these routes up to STAA standards. Lawsuits against Caltrans citing inadequate environmental review have stalled construction of these essential goods movement projects. The start date for construction has yet to be determined.
- SR 299 is the primary east-west route in northern District 1 as well as a critical goods movement route. The Buckhorn Summit project underway in District 2 will improve truck movements and safety by adding a truck climbing lane and straightening curves.
- Limited roadway capacity, narrow lanes and shoulders, and lack of passing opportunities on many rural two-lane highways create

advisories and truck restrictions based on length and weight.

- Several rural communities within the District have highways that also serve as local Main Streets, which may create more potential for auto and freight conflicts and congestion.
- Hazardous materials and waste restrictions exist on SR 20 north shore near Clear Lake, but the rest of SR 20 is STAA-accessible.

RAIL LINES

North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) owns the Northwestern Pacific (NWP) Railroad line from Korbelt to Healdsburg and has an operating easement from Healdsburg to Lombard. In 1988, the Federal Rail Authority (FRA) ordered freight operations on the NWP line to cease because tracks and highway crossing signals had deteriorated to below minimum requirements.

Restoration of service on the NWP line requires rehabilitation to FRA Class I² track standards and lifting of the executive order by the FRA. Since 2006, NCRA has concentrated on rehabilitating the segment of track from Healdsburg to Lombard. In May 2011, FRA permitted freight trains to run on the 62-mile segment between Lombard (Napa County) and Windsor (Sonoma County) in District 4.

An effort to study and east-west rail connection between the Port of Humboldt Bay and the Red Bluff area has been initiated by local advocacy groups.

Rail Issues

Restoration of freight rail north of Willits is problematic due to environmental constraints within the Eel River Canyon in Mendocino County. Since 1996, the line has been washed out at several points in the Eel River Canyon and has not operated since.

AIR CARGO AIRPORTS

The Arcata/Eureka Airport transports over 200 metric tons of cargo each year as passenger carrier belly cargo and in dedicated freighters.

Federal Express serves both Jack McNamara Field/Del Norte County Airport and Ukiah Airport. Cargo tonnage at Murray Field in Eureka exceeds 800 metric tons annually.

SEAPORTS

The Port of Humboldt Bay is the only deep-water shipping port between San Francisco (225 nautical miles south) and Coos Bay, Oregon (156 nautical miles north), as well as California's northernmost deep-water port. The Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District (HBHRCD) manages the port.

This northern port has the ability to accommodate large mid-sized cargo vessels (Panamax) capable of passing through Panama Canal locks. Forest products dominate both exports and imports; but petroleum products are also imported. Potential

future trade includes coastal shipping (including barge), bulk cargo, and marine-dependent industrial opportunities.

The Humboldt Bay Harbor District has begun improvements to existing harbor facilities. This includes purchasing an abandoned pulp mill for reuse as an industrial park. Other efforts to maintain roads and dock facilities are also ongoing.

Crescent City owns and maintains a harbor with a commercial fishing fleet and public-access docks.

Port Issues

- Humboldt County's small population and economic base (small market size) generates little inbound freight for consumption.
- Shoaling, sedimentation, and deferred dredging are substantial constraints to deepwater shipping.
- Cargo handling facilities are in disrepair.
- Remote area with rugged terrain and limited truck and no rail connectivity.

SOURCES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

California Freight Mobility Plan (2014): <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ogm/cfmp.html>

Goods Movement Action Plan (2007), California Air Resource Board and Business, Transportation and Housing:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ogm/gmap.html>

Caltrans Division of Traffic Operations: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/trafficops/trucks/>

Del Norte Local Transportation Commission: <http://www.dnltc.org/planning-documents-reports/>

Humboldt County Council of Governments, including 2014 Regional Transportation Plan: <http://hcaog.net/library>

Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) Regional Transportation Plan:

http://www.mendocinocog.org/reports_projects-RTP.shtml

North Coast Railroad Authority: <http://www.northcoastrailroad.org/index.html>

Port of Humboldt Bay website, including the Humboldt Bay Management Plan (2007): <http://www.humboldtbay.org/>

Lake County/City Area Planning Council, including the 2010 Lake County Regional Transportation Plan:

<http://lakeapc.org/index.asp>

NOTES

1. **Strategic Interregional Corridor:** Strategic Interregional Corridors are highways having the State's highest priority for programming to meet freeway/expressway standards or otherwise designated for their critical importance to interregional travel. These routes, when complete, will connect all urban areas and geographic goods movement gateways, as well as link rural and small urban areas to the trunk system. They are recognized in the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP).
2. **Class I:** A large freight rail carrier having annual operating revenues of \$250 million or more as annually adjusted by for inflation by the Surface Transportation Board. This group includes the nation's major railroads.

Freight Planning Fact Sheet

